

REMARKS

Claims 8 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by Nakajima et al (US 2001/0006500).

5 Regarding claim 8, claim 8 has been amended by the applicant to further distinguish relevant features unique to the present invention. In particular, the configuration of the delay cells are further detailed to indicate they are “ from a plurality of delay cells, the plurality of delay cells being connected in a cascade manner”. This amendment is supported in the current specification without new or additional subject matter being
10 introduced. Specifically, paragraph [0019] of the specification supports this amendment by revealing “N delay cells 42 connected in a cascade manner” also shown in Fig. 3. The structure of the plurality of delay cells described here is also similar to the structure described in previously presented claim 1, which has been stated as being allowable by the Examiner.

15 In light of the amendment above, applicant asserts that Nakajima does not teach “each buffer connected to a delay cell from a plurality of delay cells, the plurality of delay cells being connected in a cascade manner” as described in currently amended claim 8. The Examiner has identified the delay flip-flop DFF₁₆ from Fig. 10 of Nakajima as being equivalent to the delay cells in question. However, inspection of Fig. 10 will reveal that
20 DFF₁₆ is merely a single flip-flop device and as such, cannot be “connected in a cascade manner” as claimed in currently amended claim 8. Because Nakajima does not teach this essential device structure, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration for the allowance of claim 8.

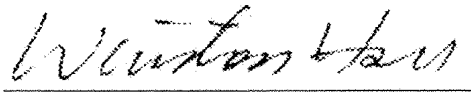
 Regarding claims 11-12, applicant points out that these claims are dependant on the
25 above-amended claim 8. Therefore, should an allowance be made for claim 8 in light of

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the above mentioned amendments, applicant asserts that allowances equally be made for claims 11 and 12 as being dependent on claim 8.

Sincerely yours,

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